Correspondence.

SOUND TALK.

Level-Headed Talk from a Level-Headed Farmer.

VIENNA, N. C., Aug. 2, 1886.

PROGRESSIVE FARMER:—I see in your paper communications from various points but none from my township. I think some one from every direction should say something in your columns in regard to matters and things coming under their observation, even if it is in a rough, home-made style, for I like that and so does everybody else.

Well, we have one Farmers' Club in our township, and we all enjoy it. Every member seems to be interested. We haven't done much yet, but are deeply impressed with the fact that by co-operating with other clubs over the county and over the State that much good can and will be accomplished. But like all other matters it has to be started, then cultivated, and afterwards maturity. Some are inclined to the belief that it is a political trick, others fear it is an attempt to injure some branch of trade. Well, now, ain't that funny? I tell them they are only guessing; but having been so often humbugged by tricksters, in many shapes and under various disguises, it is not much wonder that some do shy at this matter. Our object as a Farmers' Club is to try to bring about a better state of things for everybody—the farmer, the mechanic, the merchant, the doctor; in short, every avocation in life. We know that farming is the principal engine that drives all other machinery, and why not do all we can to be an independent, self-supporting community and country? We will never do this as long as we have our smoke houses and manure pens in Chicago and Baltimore, and go to other states for hay, when we can raise it all and to spare, right here. Now, how will we do this? Why carry out the objects and intentions of the Farmers' Clubs, and we've got it. Just a little more attention, just a little more energy in the right direction, just a little more skill applied to every farm in the State, to raising our own supplies, and if by this means we add only a little more production by every farmer, only look what a pile when thrown together! I need not try to tell how to proceed to make our lands better, and how to cultivate them better; we all know *how* to do, but we have a *sorter* of a *wont-do* disposition, and that is just what's the matter; and that is what we hope the Farmers' Clubs are going to see after and remedy. Now, I don't see anything political in that.

I have been reading THE PROGRESSIVE FARMER (and that is our standard bearer) from its first issue until the present time, and I see nothing of a political shade about it. I think it just the paper we ought to have, and I wish every farmer in North Carolina would read it, and take its advice. Yours,

E. C. D.

HOW TO CURE TOBACCO.

For the Progressive Farmer.

PROGRESSIVE FARMER:—If you will allow me space in your columns I will give my views on housing and curing tobacco, having had several years experience. I have made it my study while curing, and although not perfect, my views may be of some benefit to new beginners:

The first step is to cut a uniform barn; that is, cut every plant of the same ripeness and color, not putting more than six plants on a four foot stick, well regulated in the barn; the sticks about ten inches apart on the tier poles. (A great deal of tobacco is ruined by crowding too much in a barn.) As soon as the barn is full put fire immediately under the tobacco. It will be safe to run the fires to one hundred degrees in from one to three hours. Then fall back to ninety degrees, running at that heat until your tobacco is yellow enough to commence drying the leaf; that is, your best leaves of a uniform yellow, and the greener ones of a light pea green color. It is then time to advance the heat to one hundred degrees, observing the leaves closely, to detect sweating, which reddens and spoils the color, unless driven off. To do this, open your door and let it stand open, and open a space between the logs, by knocking out chinks on the opposite side of the barn, to let in more air; let it remain open until the leaf is cured on the lower tier. At this point more curings are spoiled than at any other stage of the process. It will be remembered that five curings are spoiled by proceeding too fast, to one failure from going too slow.

But to go back where we commenced—drying the leaf. Keep the heat at one hundred degrees for four or five hours and then advance about two degrees every hour until one hundred and ten degrees are reached. Here you have reached the most critical point in curing bright tobacco. The safest plan is to let your heat fall back to one hundred degrees and remain thirty minutes or one hour, and then go back to one hundred and ten degrees. The condition and appearance of the tobacco must now be the curer's guide. Too little heat in fixing the color operates to stain the face of the leaf a dull brown color and is called sponging. A great many times too sudden heat while the tobacco is under a sweat will cause the same; too much heat reddens the leaf, first around the edge and then in spots, which are visible on both sides. Now, to prevent sponging on one hand, and spotting on the other, is the aim of the experienced curer. No definite time can be laid down to run from one hundred and ten degrees to one hundred and twenty degrees. Sometimes four hours will suffice and then again eight hours is fast enough, but it is not best to advance above one hundred and ten degrees until the tails begin to curl up at the ends. Then advance two degrees every hour until you arrive at one hundred and twenty or one hundred and twenty-five degrees. This is the curing process. The heat should remain at or near these figures until the leaf is cured, which will require from six to eight hours, according to the amount of sap in the leaf to be expelled. When the leaf appears to be cured, advance five degrees every hour, up to one hundred and seventy or eighty degrees and let it remain so until stalk and stem are thoroughly cured. To run above one hundred and eighty degrees is to endanger scorching the tobacco and perhaps to burn both barn and tobacco.

A TOBACCO CURER.

HOW TO GET RID OF HORNS.

According to a communication by Dr. Pat. B. Clark, in the *Southern Live Stock Journal*, the horn proper is only a hollow appendage of the skin in the very young calf, and this appendage is only the matrix of the future horn. At the age of ten or fifteen days this matrix is a small, hairless, movable prominence which, with one-eighth of an inch of skin, can be removed with one sweep of a strong, sharp pocket knife, and forever the animal will be hornless. This operation is said to cause very little pain, and the loss of not over one ounce of blood, and will be sore only a day or two. The writer says he first tried this in 1868, and has performed it annually since, and that such cattle mature earlier, grow larger, and never injure each other.

We have often felt the small nub the size of a medium button, and moved it about on the calf's head, but it seems scarcely possible that simply removing this bud would destroy the growth of the horn, but we hope it is so, and would like to have some of our readers try it on a few of the calves they intend raising and let us know the result. The pain to the calf can be but slight, while nothing tends to develop mischief in a young thing as the first feelings that attend the knowledge that harm can be done with the horns.—*American Dairyman.*

SEEDING WITH GRASS ALONE.

Where grass is the most profitable crop, as it may be in favorable localities, the general desire to get a good seeding makes other crops subordinate. This has led to sowing grass seed without grain. It should always be done in the fall and the earlier the better, provided the seed is not hurried in without due preparation of the soil. But nearly as good a seeding may be had with wheat where phosphate is drilled in with the grain. The fertilizer helps the grass fully as much as the grain crop, and if the WINTER is bad for wheat it often happens that the crop is cut for hay, as the wheat will be mostly killed out. With a good wheat crop there will still be considerable timothy among the wheat straw, making a very good Winter feed for horses and cattle.

A few small boughs of cedar placed in the nests of sitting hens will rid the fowls of vermin.

Farm Notes.

KEEPING MACHINERY COVERED.

Harvesting machinery is unwieldly for getting into barns on stormy days or over night, but it is far too valuable and expensive to be left unprotected. Iron parts rust and wood work swells when exposed to rains and dews. A canvas covering to protect it at all times when not in use will pay good interest on its cost.

TYING UP TOMATOES.

As soon as the tomato plants blossom one or two stout stakes should be driven down by them and the plants securely tied. This will keep the fruit out of the dirt, and will make the vine more prolific and prevent rotting. A good stake is much better and less expensive than the trellis often used and to which the plants have to be tied to be of any benefit.

MAKING MELON VINES PRODUCTIVE.

If the melon patch is running too much to vine pinch the ends of the growing shoots. This will cause sprouts to start nearer the root, and the sap concentrated in these will be turned to fruit bearing rather than to making useless leaves. When a melon sets stop the growth a little beyond it, to concentrate the sap as much as possible on the fruit.

SQUASH VINES RANK FEEDERS.

One squash vine, if certain not to be destroyed is enough for a single hill. If more than two or three are planted together they will crowd so that none will yield much fruit. This necessity for an abundant supply of food is the reason why chance vines often yield so enormously. Vines thus coming up in a rich place have the field all to themselves, and the result shows that they occupy it fully.

TWO EGGS A DAY.

An Illinois woman had a hen which in her laying season regularly produced two eggs per day. When she was killed it was found that she had two egg sacs, each containing a fully formed egg ready to be laid the next day. A hen with this peculiarity should have been saved as a breeder. Possibly some of her chicks might inherit her peculiarity and thus a valuable breed not based on fanciful points, might be established.

CARE OF YOUNG CALVES.

As milk becomes scarce or the calves become too old to need it, they generally have as hard a time as at any period of their lives. The grass at midsummer often fails, and a little grain given twice a day will tell in the value and appearance of the animal. It is hard enough to make a profit from growing a calf up to the age when it becomes a cow; but every chance is spoiled for success if it is not kept well the first twelve months of its life.

CHURNING EACH COW'S MILK SEPARATELY.

No matter how many cows are in a dairy, each one's milk should be set by itself. In this way the difference in size and form of butter globules which often exists in different cows will not affect the yield of butter. With three or four cows in the height of season it will be necessary to churn every day, and it might as well be churning one cow's cream every three or four days, as to put all in together. If this plan were generally adopted, one-half the cows would be weeded out within a year as not worth keeping, and this greatly to the profit of their owners.

WATERING PLANTS.

Watering must be done judiciously or it will result in harm rather than good. Water should be as warm as the air, and if slightly warmer all the better. It ought to be applied in the evening, and if there is not much around the plant scrape away some loose soil and replace it after watering. Another good way is to make deep holes near the plant with a crowbar and fill these with warmish water, letting it soak into the adjoining soil before refilling the holes. If dry earth is spread over the soil it will be moistened before morning as the water will rise by capillary attraction.

EFFECT OF IMPROVED BREEDS.

An Illinois drover and butcher says that twenty-five years ago it was very difficult to find yearling steers that would weigh six hundred pounds live weight. They were not considered fully ripe until four years old and then fifteen hundred was considered an extreme weight. The feeding now is no better than then, or at least not more costly. Solely by improved breeding it is found possible to produce yearlings that weigh one thousand pounds, three-year-olds heavier than the old four-year olds, and full-grown steers weighing two thousand pounds or more. There is certainly no more bone and frame in the improved stock, and it is consequently worth more per pound to the butcher. If it has taken more feed it has returned a larger proportion to the manure heap.

ALSIKE CLOVER FOR HONEY.

A Western correspondent of the *Bee Journal* has no hesitancy in saying that the alsike clover will produce 500 pounds of the richest and best honey per acre in a good season. Those bee keepers who desire something better than dark honey should plant each spring a bushel of two of this clover, and then they will be able to compete with any honey in the country, and keep 100 colonies with profit in the same area that now supports but ten. Alsike clover does best on clay or wet land, and is sometimes unsatisfactory on dry or light soil. From four to six pounds are sown per acre. Part of the piece can be mowed before it blossoms and fed to stock. It will then blossom late after the usual crop is over.

A NORTHERN MAN'S VIEW OF THE NEGRO PROBLEM.

Two great problems will occupy the minds of this nation at no distant day. The first will be that of "Mormonism, and how to get rid of it." The second will be termed: "The Negro—How shall we manage him?"

That the negro has got to be managed will surprise some people—that class in the North who have never set foot south of the Ohio River, and who fondly imagine that the colored man of the North is a true sample of the race in this country. There is as much difference between the blacks North and South of the Ohio River as there is between Chinamen and Indians. A negro loafer is a rare case at the North, even in our cities. He feels that he must work or go ragged and hungry. The negro loafer of the South can be met with at every corner. The only feeling he has is to escape work. He can probably beg his old clothes and enough food to keep him from starving. If he can't, then look out for his thieving fingers. A Northern negro's statement is hardly ever questioned. A Southern negro will tell three lies to one truth. When we make a verbal bargain with a Northern negro, we rely upon him to carry out his part of the contract. A Southern planter may take a negro before a Justice of the Peace and swear him, and then oblige him to make his mark to an agreement drawn up in legal form to labor for so long a time at so much per month, and the negro will jump that contract whenever he pleases, without the slightest regard to honor. Nineteen out of twenty will lie to and steal from the very men to whom they are the most indebted.

Freedom and the ballot, coming together, upset the slave. As a slave he worked and obeyed certain rules and regulations because he feared the penalty. Left to do his own planning he has no head. Left to carry out his own ideas, he makes lying, deceiving and trickery take the place of work. As a farm laborer, no one can be sure whether he will stay a day or a month. The very best of them will quit work whenever the whim seizes. Saturday is a holiday in which he must go to town and spend his last cent, no matter how the crops are situated.

In the North the virtue of the average colored woman is unquestioned. In the South not one in a thousand is credited with it. As a race they do not know the meaning of the term. A colored preacher at Augusta, who was soliciting subscriptions to rebuild a country church swept away by a cyclone, told me that almost every man in his congregation felt at liberty to desert his wife and children and marry again whenever he so willed. He had churched dozens of them for having two, three and four wives.

Southern men have seen a change in the negro year by year. He has no ambition—no industry. Year by year it is becoming more difficult to handle him as a laborer. He is deserting the country for the towns. He is ungrateful and trifling. For the benefit of Northern philanthropists I should like to say that the race has improved. In one way it has. More of them can read and write, but this very improvement has worked them an injury. The colored man who can read a newspaper or write a letter, will not do a stroke of work if he starves as the penalty. He is above it, and looking for an office. Ninety-eight out of a hundred live like dogs and worse. Right on the plantation where they work they will steal the owner blind.

As for schools, the money is equally divided, and they are given every chance, but the father whose boy can earn him two bits a day, will not send him to school an hour. Educate a colored girl and she puts on airs, refuses to do work, and runs off to some city to live a fast life. Replace the negro labor of the South with white men, and her crops would double, but the negro keeps the white labor away. He won't work and he won't get out.

The people of the South have borne from the black man what no other people would endure. They pass over his impudence, find excuse for his laziness, and sympathize with him when he comes before the law. They pay all his taxes, burthen themselves with his schooling, stand for his doctor bills, and feel far more kindness for him than any of us in the North. And yet there must be a change. The agriculture of the South must drift backwards, the negro must get out, or there must be some better way of controlling him. Our Northern farmers rout out their hired help at day break, and push 'em for all they are worth. The negro can not be routed out. He can not be pushed. If $5,000 worth of oats were in danger he would not quicken his pace nor give up his trip to town. Bind yourself to give him $1,000 per month, and he will jump the contract the same as if the figures were $12. And he is not only a natural tyrant but naturally cruel. He will knock his mule down with a club, where a white man would not speak out sharply. He will pound his wife as if she were a dog, and I have repeatedly seen white men interfere to prevent them from crippling their children.

We all want the negro to improve. He has become a part and a portion of our country, our politics and our ballads. But let us not deceive ourselves. He is a far worse problem than the savage Indian of the plains.

The latter we can force with bullet and bayonet. The former can only be punished as a law-breaker and he laughs at the penalty.

Singling out the two States of Georgia and Alabama, and taking their progress for the last five years as a basis, let me turn prophet for a moment. Ten years hence Alabama will be supplying a great share of the country with coal and iron. Selma, Huntsville and Montgomery will have nearly doubled their population. Birmingham will have a population of 40,000 to 50,000. The State will have two or three more railroads, two or more large stove works, a car wheel factory, a great agricultural works, at least two canning factories, and a score of new towns will have been founded.

Ten years from this the two states together will control most of the Southern fruit and vegetable shipments. Atlanta will have at least 15,000 more population, and every town and city in that State will have steadily gained. Georgia will point to scores of "new industries." Her capital will be increased by millions. Her colored help will have been almost entirely replaced by white labor. Her shipments of fruits, berries and melons will reach every Northern market. Between Atlanta and Macon there will be established an immense fruit canning factory. She will have a hundred more sawmills, a score more grist mills, and half a dozen great agricultural and machine works, while every county in the State will be accessible by railroad. The last ten years worked even mere wondrous changes.

The people of the South are just beginning to wake up. Their long nap has ended and the Yankee has got to take off his coat or he will find the order of manufacturing and buying reversed. Connecticut will buy her rat-traps in Montgomery, and Michigan her plows in Atlanta.—*M. Quad, in Detroit Free Press.*

—Oregon pays a bounty of two cents for every squirrel killed, and one man was recently paid for 125,000 squirrel tails which he had collected.